



[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2018-0694; Product Identifier 2016-SW-068-AD; Amendment 39-19564; AD 2019-03-12]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Airbus Helicopters Model EC225LP helicopters. This AD requires repetitive inspections of each life raft inflation cylinder percussion system bellcrank (bellcrank). This AD was prompted by reports of jammed bellcranks. The actions of this AD are intended to prevent an unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective [INSERT DATE 35 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this final rule, contact Airbus Helicopters, 2701 N. Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, TX 75052; telephone (972) 641-0000 or (800) 232-0323; fax (972) 641-3775; or at http://www.helicopters.airbus.com/website/en/ref/Technical-Support_73.html. You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0694; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this AD, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, the economic evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations (phone: 800-647-5527) is U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Hatfield, Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy., Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5110; email david.hatfield@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

On August 9, 2018, at 83 FR 39382, the Federal Register published our notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM), which proposed to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to Airbus Helicopters Model EC225 LP helicopters with a life raft installed. The NPRM proposed to require, before further flight and thereafter at intervals not exceeding 6 months, cleaning and lubricating each bellcrank and pivot link. The proposed requirements were intended to prevent a jammed bellcrank which could result in failure of a life raft to release in an emergency and subsequent injury to occupants.

The NPRM was prompted by EASA AD No. 2016-0200, dated October 11, 2016 (EASA AD 2016-0200), issued by EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, to correct an unsafe condition for Airbus Helicopters Model EC 225 LP helicopters. EASA advises of a report of the left-hand and right-hand bellcranks becoming jammed. EASA states an investigation determined the bellcranks were jammed by the accumulation of a foreign coating material in the bellcrank hole. EASA further states that investigation of an additional incident of a jammed bellcrank determined that corrosion in the bellcrank hole caused the jam. This condition, according to EASA, could result in failure of the life rafts to release in an emergency and subsequent injury to occupants during an otherwise survivable accident. To address this unsafe condition, EASA AD 2016-0200 requires repetitive cleaning and lubrication of each bellcrank and pivot link.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD, but we did not receive any comments on the NPRM.

FAA's Determination

These helicopters have been approved by the aviation authority of France and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with France, EASA, its technical representative, has notified us of the unsafe condition described in its AD. We are issuing this AD because we evaluated all information provided by EASA and determined the unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other helicopters of the same type design and that air safety and the public interest require adopting the AD requirements as proposed.

Related Service Information

We reviewed Airbus Helicopters Emergency Alert Service Bulletin No. 05A050, Revision 0, dated July 22, 2016, which contains procedures for cleaning and lubricating each bellcrank and pivot link of the life raft inflation cylinder percussion system and removing any corrosion if necessary.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 5 helicopters of U.S. Registry.

At an average labor rate of \$85 per work-hour, we estimate that operators may incur the following costs in order to comply with this AD. Cleaning and lubricating both bellcranks and pivot links requires about 16 work-hours, and required materials costs are minimal, for a cost of \$1,360 per helicopter and \$6,800 for the U.S. fleet per inspection cycle.

Authority for this Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: "General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority

because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on helicopters identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

This AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this AD:

- (1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866;
- (2) Is not a “significant rule” under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);
- (3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska to the extent that it justifies making a regulatory distinction; and
- (4) Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

We prepared an economic evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this AD and placed it in the AD docket.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

2019-03-12 **Airbus Helicopters:** Amendment 39-19564; Docket No. FAA-2018-0694;

Product Identifier 2016-SW-068-AD.

(a) Applicability

This AD applies Airbus Helicopters Model EC225 LP helicopters with a life raft installed, certificated in any category.

(b) Unsafe Condition

This AD defines the unsafe condition as a jammed bellcrank in a life raft jettison inflation cylinder percussion system (bellcrank). This condition could result in failure of a life raft to release in an emergency and subsequent injury to occupants.

(c) Effective Date

This AD becomes effective [INSERT DATE 35 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(d) Compliance

You are responsible for performing each action required by this AD within the specified compliance time unless it has already been accomplished prior to that time.

(e) Required Actions

Before further flight, and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 6 months:

(1) Clean each bellcrank and pivot link and inspect each bellcrank hole for corrosion. If there is any corrosion in a bellcrank hole:

(i) Remove the corrosion without exceeding a maximum depth of 0.1 millimeter (0.004 inch).

(ii) Clean each pivot link using 400-grain abrasive paper.

(iii) Apply corrosion protectant (Alodine 1200 or equivalent) to each bellcrank hole.

(2) Lubricate each bellcrank hole with grease before assembling the bellcrank.

(f) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to David Hatfield, Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy., Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5110; email 9-ASW-FTW-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) For operations conducted under a 14 CFR part 119 operating certificate or under 14 CFR part 91, subpart K, we suggest that you notify your principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office or certificate holding district office, before operating any aircraft complying with this AD through an AMOC.

(g) Additional Information

(1) Airbus Helicopters Emergency Alert Service Bulletin No. 05A050, Revision 0, dated July 22, 2016, which is not incorporated by reference, contains additional information about the subject of this AD. For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus Helicopters, 2701 N. Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, TX 75052; telephone (972) 641-0000 or (800) 232-0323; fax (972) 641-3775; or at http://www.helicopters.airbus.com/website/en/ref/Technical-Support_73.html. You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

(2) The subject of this AD is addressed in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD No. 2016-0200, dated October 11, 2016. You may view the EASA AD on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> in Docket No. FAA-2018-0694.

(h) Subject

Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: 2564 Life Raft.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on February 15, 2019.

Lance T. Gant,

Director, Compliance & Airworthiness Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2019-04024 Filed: 3/6/2019 8:45 am; Publication Date: 3/7/2019]